

American Fisheries Society – Fish Health Section
Procedural Manual

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The officers and committees of the Fish Health Section (FHS) of the American Fisheries Society (AFS) are composed of members that have assumed their responsibilities voluntarily from elections or appointments. The purpose of this manual is to provide FHS members with a reference document that specifies the functions and duties of all offices, committees, and other workings of the Section. In so doing, the goals of the FHS may be better realized and the fish health profession, in general, strengthened by better organization.

This manual is a living document requiring periodical updating as by-laws, committees, and their functions change over time. The general format of this document has been adapted from the AFS Procedural Manual published in 1992.

I. History and Function of the FHS

The FHS was the first Section of the AFS and was established in 1972. The FHS was created by a small nucleus of fish health professionals comprising a steering committee that included: Jim Warren (Chair), Ron Goede, Chuck Hicks, Bob Summerfelt, Dave McDaniel, Pete Bullock, Roger Herman, Bill Klontz, Bill Wingfield, and John Plumb. Dr. John Fryer was the first FHS President, with President Elect Dr. Pete Bullock and Mr. Jim Warren as Secretary-Treasurer. The name, Fish Health Section, was decided upon and established in the Constitution of the parent Society. From this auspicious beginning, the FHS has become a permanent subunit of the AFS.

The objectives of the FHS are as outlined in the FHS by-laws:

- To maintain an association of persons involved in safeguarding the health of aquatic animals.
- To focus attention on aquatic animal health problems by making available to the public appropriate news items, results of completed research and other educational information.
- To stimulate the application of effective aquatic animal health practices by communicating with those entities interested in developing sound aquatic animal health programs.

The FHS accomplishes these objectives in the following manner:

- By making information and technical materials on aquatic animal health available to FHS members and other interested parties within publications and information outlets, such as the FHS Listserv, the FHS Blue Book “Suggested Procedures for the Detection and Identification of Certain Finfish and Shellfish Pathogens” and the Journal of Aquatic Animal Health (JAAH).
- By submitting to the officers of the parent AFS an annual report on the status of the FHS and recommendations for AFS action as appropriate.
- By promoting the development and use of standardized, reliable techniques for detection, diagnosis and management of certain diseases of aquatic animals.
- By developing and maintaining professional standards, certification procedures and a peer review system to ensure professional competence and ethical practices.

The FHS Listserv keeps aquatic animal health professionals updated on FHS news, meetings, job opportunities, resources, industry news, and other news. The FHS website (<https://units.fisheries.org/fhs/>) contains information such as by-laws and procedural manual, officers and committees, awards, certification, student and early career member information, meetings, the Blue Book, and archive newsletters. The Journal of Aquatic Animal Health is a peer reviewed professional journal established by the FHS and the AFS to serve the international community of scientists concerned with the health of aquatic organisms. The journal carries research papers on the latest developments in the field of health of aquatic organisms, including but not limited to infectious and noninfectious disease characterization, drug and chemical treatments, diagnostic assays, nutrition, and immunization programs. Standardized fin- and shellfish diagnostic methods and procedures are published and continually updated in the FHS Blue Book - "Suggested Procedures for the Detection and Identification of Certain Finfish and Shellfish Pathogens." Finally, certification of Fish Pathologists and Aquatic Animal Health Inspectors is a peer review system administered by the FHS Professional Standards Committee that recognizes professional competence and ethical practices.

Chapter 2: Membership

Membership in the FHS is composed of AFS members in good standing who pay FHS dues. Each FHS member is entitled to one vote on all matters requiring the approval of the membership. Affiliate membership in the FHS is available to non-AFS members who are members of other scientific societies and associations with an interest in aquatic animal health. Affiliate membership will convey most benefits and rights of full membership including subscription to the Section journal, receipt of periodic updates via the FHS Listserv, invitation to serve on committees, and participation in FHS programs such as professional certification or continuing education. Benefits not available to affiliate members are those prohibited by parent AFS by-laws, which includes the requirement that all officers and committee chairs of subunits be active members of the Society. All committee members must be members of the FHS. Examples of other scientific societies and associations whose members would qualify for affiliate membership include, but are not limited to, the American Veterinary Medical Association, the European Association of Fish Pathologists, the World Aquaculture Society, the Society for Invertebrate Pathology, and the International Association of Aquatic Animal Medicine. Annual membership fees for the succeeding calendar year become due on December 31 and are delinquent thereafter. The Executive Committee determines annually the fee to be assessed.

I. Section Officers and Executive Committee

A. Section Officers

The officers of the FHS include the President, the President Elect, the Vice-President, the Secretary-Treasurer and the Immediate Past President. Except for the Immediate Past President, all officers are elected by electronic ballot for terms extending from the FHS's annual business meeting following the election until the annual business meeting of the following year. All officers must be active members of both the FHS and the AFS. The Secretary-Treasurer may hold office for two consecutive terms, with three years per term. Terms for the other three officers are one year each, whereby the Vice-President transitions to the President Elect after their first year of service, followed by subsequent annual transitions to President and then Immediate Past-President. Nominations for

candidates to occupy the four offices are solicited by the Nominating and Balloting Committee. If an office is vacated prematurely, the Executive Committee can appoint a qualified replacement to complete the unexpired term.

B. Duties of Section Officers

President

- a. The President serves as Chair of the Executive Committee (EXCOM), presides over FHS meetings, appoints all committees (in consultation with EXCOM) where a specific means of selection is not stipulated, and serves as ex officio member thereof except where stated. At the President's discretion, the responsibility of appointing appropriate committee membership may be delegated to the appointed committee Chair.
- b. The President (or designate) represents the FHS to the parent AFS.
- c. The President can make other appointments and performs other duties as are authorized and necessary to meet the objectives of the Section in consultation with EXCOM.
- d. The President, with assistance from EXCOM, prepares an annual report to the Executive Committee of the AFS on the status of the FHS, including any recommendations for AFS action. When appropriate, this report may also include significant FHS activities, information on any current serious aquatic animal health problems and/or current advances in aquatic animal disease control. The report must be submitted to the Executive Committee of the AFS in time for inclusion in the agenda of the AFS semi-annual meetings.
- e. Immediately after taking office, the President submits to the Listserv Editor: (1) a list of current committees with the new appointments; and (2) a "President's Message" that details the goals and objectives for the President's tenure, both of which are published in the next FHS Listserv update. Additional Presidential communications to the membership may be published in the Listserv as determined by the President.
- f. The Immediate Past-President is responsible for thanking the meeting organizing committee and presenting the certificates of awards, especially the S.F. Snieszko Distinguished Service Award (SDSA), at an appropriate FHS meeting banquet. This would generally take place during the annual FHS meeting. Names of candidates for the SDSA solicited by the Awards Committee are received by the President for voting by the EXCOM and previous surviving SDSA recipients no later than two months prior to the meeting at which the award is to be presented. The Immediate Past-President also introduces the incoming President during the FHS business meeting and again during the annual awards ceremony.
- g. The President is a signatory on certificates for FHS Aquatic Animal Health Inspectors and Fish Pathologists certified by the Professional Standards Committee. The President is responsible for sending these certificates to successful applicants with letters of congratulation.
- h. The President of the FHS is a member of the AFS Executive Committee and is a voting member so long as the FHS has ≥ 200 members at the end of the previous calendar year. As a member of the AFS EXCOM, the President (or President-appointed alternate) is expected to attend the two fall meetings and the spring meeting of the AFS EXCOM. Travel expenses for the FHS President (or President-appointed alternate) to attend these meetings will be financed by the FHS budget provided that adequate funds are present.

- i. The President is responsible for advising the incoming President Elect of the presidential duties.
- j. The President prepares and presides over the agenda for the annual FHS EXCOM business meeting held in conjunction with the annual FHS meeting or workshop. This meeting, generally held sometime during July to September, marks the end of the President's tenure and the beginning as Immediate Past President.

President Elect

- a. The President Elect performs the duties of the President in the absence of the President.
- b. The President Elect serves as the Rules Officer of the FHS to: (a) assure FHS compliance with its by-laws, (b) coordinate the adoption of any changes to the by-laws, and (c) maintain liaison communication with the Constitutional Consultant of the AFS.
- c. The President Elect is responsible for updating the FHS Procedural Manual by soliciting reviews from Section committee chairs and officers regarding the manual's accuracy of current committee functions and duties of office. This includes any procedural changes that might occur due to changes in the Section by-laws.
- d. The President Elect serves as the Chair of the Policy/Position Development Committee.
- e. The President Elect presents the Past-President certificate to the outgoing President and is installed as President of the FHS at the annual FHS and/or AFS meeting if these meetings are held jointly and are suitably scheduled.
- f. The President Elect serves with the members of the Professional Standards Committee regarding investigation of any alleged unethical conduct of a certified Aquatic Animal Health Inspector or Fish Pathologist according to procedures in Chapter 5.VI.

Vice-President

- a. The office of the Vice-President lengthens the service of the leadership role, providing continuity in the Section with 4 years of involvement ending after service as the Immediate Past-President.
- b. The Vice-President serves as a member of the Policy/Position Development Committee.
- c. Pending final approval by the FHS EXCOM, the Vice-President selects the time and place for the annual meeting to be held three years hence, when the Vice-President will preside over the business meeting as President. The following criteria apply:
 1. The incoming Vice-President appoints an ad hoc Program Committee to help organize the annual meeting three years hence. The committee initially consists of two members. When a site is selected, a third member is appointed as Chair and is a person associated with the agency and/or place that will be hosting the meeting. This third member is also responsible for taking charge of the selection of the best student paper award among the candidate presentations as indicated by the criteria listed in Chapter 5, Miscellaneous Criteria, under section V. "Awards".
 2. In selecting a meeting site, the Program Committee submits to the EXCOM a list of appropriate candidate cities with a recommendation for the site of the meeting three years hence.
 3. The Program Committee is responsible for obtaining information on each candidate city, for obtaining invitations from members willing to serve as local arrangement hosts, for

- ascertaining whether available facilities are adequate and for any other organizational planning of the meeting.
4. In selecting the meeting site, the Program Committee should communicate with the parent Society and other Sections, as well as regional groups of the Fish Health Section, concerning the potential for negotiated agreements of joint meetings.
 5. The Program Committee and the person (Vice-President) appointing that committee are responsible for tracking the progress of meeting arrangements until held three years hence.
- d. The Vice-President is installed as the President Elect of the FHS at the annual FHS meeting and/or joint meeting with the AFS if suitably scheduled to accommodate the installation ceremonies.

Secretary-Treasurer

- a. The Secretary-Treasurer safeguards and controls the funds of the FHS and prepares an annual itemized budget for FHS EXCOM approval that fosters solvency of the Section and designates the allocation of FHS funds. The budget year begins July 1 and the final budget figures must be approved by the Section EXCOM.
- b. The Secretary-Treasurer receives and accounts for income from sales of publications, fund raising efforts, membership fees not submitted directly to the parent AFS, pays all bills, and keeps an itemized account of receipts and disbursements.
 1. Two accounts are established to accomplish the daily bill-paying, accounting, etc.: (a) a high interest savings account; and (b) a checking account. The FHS is a nonprofit organization and interest is tax-exempt. The Section tax-exempt number is that of the parent Society, i.e., 23-7354565.
 2. Ordering of FHS stationery and envelopes is done as needed.
- c. The Secretary-Treasurer prepares a financial report for the Annual Report to the FHS EXCOM and an annual financial report for the membership to be published in the FHS Listserv update.
- d. Other committee reports are solicited by memo or email from the Secretary-Treasurer and/or the President for the Annual Report ten weeks prior to the FHS Annual Meeting. If a report is not submitted, "NOT RECEIVED" is noted in the Annual Report. Copies of the reports are made available to the EXCOM and committee chairs during the EXCOM business meeting. Approximately 10-15 copies are needed.
- e. Reports to AFS are prepared and submitted as requested.
- f. The Secretary-Treasurer orders a plaque-mounted Past-President's certificate from the Executive Director of the parent AFS (301-897-8616) at least ten weeks prior to the annual meeting and delivers it to the President Elect for presentation to the outgoing President at the annual FHS meeting. If other awards are to be given, such as the Snieszko Distinguished Service Award, they are ordered from the parent AFS at the same time once the names of the recipients are identified. This must be coordinated with the Chair of the Awards Committee.
- g. The Snieszko endowment and Blue Book accounts are maintained by the AFS office. Appropriate personnel at the AFS office (301-897-8616) are contacted for the current balances.

- h. The Secretary-Treasurer reads the minutes from last year's business and EXCOM meetings at the annual FHS EXCOM meeting (during the annual FHS meeting). Business decisions and minutes of the current meeting are recorded.
- i. The Secretary-Treasurer receives fees from applications for Fish Pathologist and Aquatic Animal Health Inspector certifications and application fees for recertification from the Chair of the Professional Standards Committee. These are recorded and deposited. After successful completion of all requirements, the Chair of the Professional Standards Committee is responsible for having certificates printed and sent to the successful applicants.

C. The Executive Committee

- a. The FHS EXCOM consists of the officers (e.g., President, the President Elect, the Vice-President, and the Secretary-Treasurer), the Technical Standards Committee Chair, the Professional Standards Committee Chair, and the Immediate Past-President as voting members. The chairs of the other standing committees, the editors of the JAAH, and the editors of the Listserv are ex officio or non-voting members and are invited to the FHS EXCOM meeting to present committee reports and participate in the discussion of FHS business.
- b. The FHS EXCOM has the authority to determine policy and conduct business consistent with the objectives of the Section. The FHS EXCOM may authorize the disbursement of FHS funds for specific clerical tasks and other operational expenses. No real property or capital equipment may be purchased with FHS funds without the approval of the membership.
- c. The FHS EXCOM maintains an awareness of serious aquatic animal health problems, significant advances in aquatic animal disease control and prepares appropriate resolutions for parent AFS action. The FHS EXCOM is responsible for aiding the President in preparation of the FHS's annual report to the AFS.
- d. Meetings of the FHS EXCOM may be held whenever the President (or the President Elect as the designated alternate) and a majority of the voting members of the committee are present to conduct Section business. Business and voting within the EXCOM may be conducted by mail, electronically, or by telephone.
- e. Candidates selected by the Awards Committee to be considered for the Snieszko Distinguished Service Award are voted upon by the EXCOM and all surviving past recipients of the award.
- f. The EXCOM establishes the annual membership fees for the FHS and approves the funding of any special projects such as symposia, publications or continuing education.

Chapter 3: Standing Committees

I. Elected Committees

Members of these committees are elected by the FHS membership. Committee chairs must be active members of the FHS and the parent AFS. Hence, the senior member of a committee eligible as the next Chair is defined as an active member of the FHS and the AFS having the longest service on the committee. The method for determining the Chair and tenure for members of new committees created by

amendment of the by-laws is as follows. Elected members of a new committee will decide who will serve as first Chair (1 yr) and the seniority of the other members concerning who will be the next Chair (2 yr) and thereafter (3 yr) and so on, depending on the number of members in the committee. When the tenure of chair # 1 is over after 1 year, another member is elected to continue the cycle. In the event of a midterm vacancy on an elected committee, the President may appoint a replacement committee member to serve until the next election in consultation with the EXCOM. The President may solicit suggestions for a replacement member from the committee chair. If the unplanned vacancy is the committee chair, the President can appoint the next senior committee member to serve as chair until the next election. The exception is the Professional Standards Committee, for which unplanned vacancies are filled by vote of the EXCOM.

A. Nominating and Balloting Committee

The Nominating and Balloting Committee consists of the Immediate Past-President and three members elected by the membership by electronic ballot. Elected members serve a 3-year term and one new member is elected to the committee each year. The chair is the senior elected member. If this person is unable or unwilling to serve, the President of the FHS will appoint the next senior person as Chair.

- a. The Nominating and Balloting Committee solicits nominations for a slate of at least two candidates each for the offices of Vice-President and Secretary-Treasurer. It is the responsibility of the committee to verify the eligibility of all nominees before the official ballots are prepared. Nominations of Section members in good standing are submitted to the committee Chair five months prior to the annual FHS meeting. Nominating petitions must have the consent of the nominees to be considered by the committee. In addition, the slate of candidates for the Professional Standards Committee, the Technical Standards Committee and the Nominating and Balloting Committee will be identified by the same date. The Nominating and Balloting Committee is responsible for timely preparation and execution of electronic voting via SurveyMonkey (www.surveymonkey.com). The election should be made available to all Section members and the results promptly reported to the President and Listserv editor.
- b. Biographical sketches of the candidates are emailed to all members via the Listserv approximately two months prior to the annual meeting. Ballots for the annual election of officers and other elected committees are emailed to the membership approximately one month prior to the annual meeting via SurveyMonkey. Candidates are elected by a majority or plurality of the ballots returned to the Nominating and Balloting Committee by the designated deadline. In the event of tie votes, the EXCOM will decide the winner by a majority vote. This procedure can be applied to other voting issues as needed.
- c. Guidelines for conducting a FHS officer election
 1. Obtain member lists of the current EXCOM and all other FHS committees from the current FHS president and a listing of past presidents available on the FHS website. This will prevent the nomination of people that may have served recently or are already on a committee or multiple committees.
 2. Obtain FHS membership lists from the AFS office and from the current FHS communication listserv provider to determine that nominees and voters alike are paid

- members. Non-members or members that have allowed their dues to lapse would be eligible if they are willing to join or reinstate their membership if elected.
3. Solicit nominations from the membership via the FHS website and the communication listserv by written announcement providing the responsibilities and duties associated with each office requiring nominees and the deadlines for closing nominations and finalizing the elections.
 4. Verify that all nominees are FHS members and that they are willing to serve by either email or telephone. Generate nominee lists for each office.
 5. Verify the eligibility of nominees for The Professional Standards Committee such that they are certified Aquatic Animal Health Inspectors or Fish Pathologists or have earned a DVM. Certified members are listed on the FHS website.
 6. The final list of candidates should be sent to the FHS president for approval and solicit biosketches from each of the successful candidates.
 7. The election ballot listing each candidate for a specific office and attached biosketch files will be made available to each member via a personalized weblink sent to them by SurveyMonkey. Instructions for how to submit their vote and the deadline for voting will also be provided in the SurveyMonkey email. See the document “Instructions for SurveyMonkey” for further information.
 8. Results from each ballot are automatically gathered and counted by SurveyMonkey. At the end of the designated voting time, no more responses will be accepted, and the results will be final.
 9. The results of the election are provided in a short committee report to the President of the FHS for inclusion in the annual meeting agenda. Results are also emailed to each candidate and should be posted on the communication Listserv and the FHS website.

B. Technical Standards Committee

- a. The Technical Standards Committee (TSC) consists of three members elected by the FHS. Members serve a 3-year term and one new member is elected to the committee each year. The Chair is the senior member of the committee. The committee fosters and promotes the use of standard, reliable and sensitive technical procedures for detection, diagnosis and confirmation of aquatic animal diseases and for enhancing the health of aquatic animals.
- b. The committee is composed of recognized technical specialists and is responsible for compiling and distributing the Fish Health Section Blue Book "Procedures for the Detection and Identification of Certain Finfish and Shellfish Pathogens".
- c. The Blue Book consists of three Sections: 1) Diagnostics, 2) Aquatic Animal Health Inspections, and 3) Quality Assurance/Quality Control. The Technical Standards Committee is responsible for making sure that diagnostic chapters (Section 1) are up-to-date and that important and emerging diseases are included. Members of the Technical Standards Committee also serve on the joint FHS/USFWS (United States Fisheries and Wildlife Service) “Handbook Revision and Oversight Committee” that produces “Standard Procedures for Aquatic Animal Health Inspections”. This document is included verbatim in the Blue Book as the Aquatic Animal Health Inspections section (Section 2). The Quality Assurance/Quality Control section (Section 3) is the product of an independent committee and was first included in the 2005 Blue Book. The Technical Standards Committee is

- responsible for making sure that this section is periodically reviewed and updated as needed. When an update is needed, the Technical Standards Committee will work with the USFWS to appoint a committee to update the Quality Assurance/Quality Control section.
- d. The duties of the committee also include editorial responsibilities such as format, review, and the determination of needs for appropriate additions or revisions to the Blue Book and mechanisms of distribution of the Blue Book to the membership and other interested parties or agencies. Editorial responsibilities also include making sure that new and revised chapters contain appropriate pictures and illustrations that take full advantage of the digital format. The Committee is responsible for the production and maintenance of the digital files of the Blue Book.
 - e. If the Chair does not have administrative support to adequately maintain records for this committee, the Technical Standards Committee may utilize an executive secretary. To do so, the committee must provide the nomination of a willing member or outside entity to the FHS President immediately following the FHS elections. The FHS President will provide the nomination to EXCOM for approval. The purpose of the executive secretary is to maintain records and the record keeping process. The appointment for the executive secretary may not exceed three years and is a non-voting position on the committee. The executive secretary is eligible to be re-appointed for another 3-year term using the described procedure. If duties are not being performed satisfactorily, the TSC executive secretary may be removed by a majority vote of the TSC.
 - f. Procedures for keeping the Blue Book current:
 1. The Technical Standards committee identifies diagnostic chapters that need to be revised or added. Potential revisions or additions to the Blue Book are considered annually based on new information in the scientific literature. Suggestions should be solicited from the membership in the Newsletter and at the annual meeting. Revisions or additions are collated by the committee and sent out to reviewers knowledgeable about the disciplines involved. These approved revised or new diagnostic chapters are included in the next edition of the Blue Book.
 2. Selection of authors. It is the responsibility of the Technical Standards committee to select and approve any authors. In the case of a revision, the committee will first request a revision from the primary author of the chapter to be revised, giving the primary author the option of first refusal. If the previous author declines to revise the chapter, they will be asked to suggest possible new authors. The committee will consider the recommendations of the previous author, and other suitably qualified professionals in the selection of a new author. Ultimately, the committee will select the author(s). For new chapters, the Committee may either seek out an author or may accept an offer from a potential author if that person is suitably qualified.
 - i. Committee members also serve on the joint FHS/USFWS Handbook Revision and Oversight Committee that produces a document known to the USFWS as “Standard Procedures for Aquatic Animal Health Inspections” and the FHS as “Section 2: Inspection Methods”. The Handbook Committee is composed of three members of the FHS, the president of the FHS, three USFWS employees representing USFWS interests, and the USFWS National Fish Health Coordinator. Technical Standards members begin serving on the joint Handbook Committee in their second year. In their third year of service, they serve as the Chair of Technical Standards and the Co-Chair of the Handbook Committee. At the end of that year, the Chair of the Technical

Standards is no longer formally a member of that committee but is expected to serve an additional year as “Past Chair” on the Handbook Committee.

- ii. The USFWS and FHS have agreed to annually solicit comments on “Standard Procedures for Aquatic Animal Health Inspections/Section 2: Inspection Methods”, to address those comments through revision or rebuttal, and to publish a new version of the inspection methods on an annual basis. A detailed description of this revision process is included in Section 2 under the heading “A1.3 Process for Amending the Handbook”. There is a detailed flow chart that specifies the deadlines for each step in the revision process. This means that a new edition of the Blue Book must come out every year and that it must include the revised Inspection Methods section, any new Diagnostic Methods chapters, and any revision to the Quality Assurance/Quality Control section.
- iii. The Chair of Technical Standards works with the USFWS Handbook Committee Co-Chair to update all the master files for “Standard Procedures for Aquatic Animal Health Inspections/Section 2: Inspection Methods” and is responsible for making all the changes in the master files for the Diagnostic and Quality Assurance/Quality Control sections. This includes making sure that all the footers for each chapter reflect the date of the most recent revision of that chapter, naming new files with the year created, and moving old files to the appropriate files for archiving. When the master files are complete and updated the Chair ensures that the new files are uploaded to the Blue Book website.
- iv. The Chair of Technical Standards is responsible for maintaining copies and appropriate backups of all sections of the Blue Book and for ensuring that the incoming chair receives all the files. The importance of adequate backups of the master files, including duplicates held at another institution, cannot be overstated. It is also the responsibility of the Technical Standards Chair to make sure that the file format for the Blue Book is updated as needed to remain compatible with current mainstream software.
- v. The Chair of Technical Standards and the USFWS Co-Chair of the Inspection Handbook Committee will give a joint presentation at the annual meeting of the FHS that outlines changes and additions to the Blue Book. That presentation may be during the technical sessions or during business meeting.

C. Professional Standards Committee

- a. The Professional Standards Committee (PSC) consists of three members elected by the FHS. Each member of the committee must be one of the following: a certified Aquatic Animal Health Inspector, a certified Fish Pathologist or a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine. No FHS member whose professional certification has been revoked for cause may serve on the committee.
- b. Members serve a 3-year term and one new member is elected to the committee each year. The Chair is the senior member of the committee. Unexpected vacancies in the committee are filled by appointment of a qualified replacement by the EXCOM and the appointee will complete the term of the committee member replaced.

- c. The committee is responsible for developing and maintaining a system for recognizing professional competence in the aquatic animal health field by administering the professional certification programs of the Section.
- d. The committee is responsible for consideration of any alleged unethical conduct by a certified individual according to the procedures in Chapter 5.VI.
- e. In coordination with the Continuing Education Committee, the Professional Standards Committee will specify and approve a continuing education program through workshops, seminars, meetings and classes to meet the 5-year re-certification requirements for Aquatic Animal Health Inspectors and Fish Pathologists.
- f. The committee is responsible for evaluating applications from members seeking certification or re-certification as Aquatic Animal Health Inspectors and/or Fish Pathologists in a timely manner. Only qualified applicants are certified or re-certified by the committee according to the standards and procedures for certification as established by the Section.
- g. Applicants are certified or re-certified by a majority vote from at least two committee members. Itemized instructions for committee members, record keeping, notifications to applicants and sample correspondence are maintained by the Professional Standards Committee.
- h. Changes in the qualification requirements for certified Aquatic Animal Health Inspectors and Fish Pathologists must be approved by a 2/3 majority vote of the FHS members by mail ballot.
- i. The responsibility of the Chair is to be the contact person for applicants and to ensure that the application paperwork flows to the other voting members of the committee and back to applicants as notifications are made. The Chair can delegate this function to the PSC executive secretary (see Section r. below). The Chair or PSC executive secretary receives all certification applications and fees and maintains a written record of the status of all application evaluations from start to finish. Application fees are forwarded to the Secretary-Treasurer for deposit in the Section account.
- j. The committee is responsible for developing the written exam for certification of Aquatic Animal Health Inspectors and Fish Pathologists by soliciting for appropriate test questions and photographs from the Section membership covering topics on finfish/shellfish disease etiology, diagnostic procedures, pathology, therapy, pond management, general husbandry and disease control. A score of 70% is required to pass the written exam.
- k. The Chair of the committee receives the nonrefundable certification examination fees from the Fish Pathologist applicants (\$100) and the Aquatic Animal Health Inspector applicants (\$50) and forwards the money to the Secretary- Treasurer for deposit. The Chair can delegate this function to the PSC executive secretary (see Section r. below). The Chair must notify the applicants of the site, date and time of the examination.
- l. A member of the committee or an agent appointed by the committee administers the written certification exam for Aquatic Animal Health Inspector and Fish Pathologist at the annual Section meeting or other appropriate meeting.
- m. Upon successful completion of the written certification examination, the Chair of the committee will notify the applicant and the FHS President.
- n. The Chair of the committee is a signatory on certificates for Aquatic Animal Health Inspectors and Fish Pathologists and is responsible for ordering them. Upon receipt, they are signed and forwarded to the FHS President for signatures. The President then forwards the signed certificates to the successful applicants.

- o. The Chair of the committee is responsible for ordering and mailing the 5-year re-certification seals and a congratulatory letter to Aquatic Animal Health Inspectors and Fish Pathologists that are successfully re-certified.
- p. The Chair of the committee is responsible for providing a list of newly certified Fish Pathologists and Aquatic Animal Health Inspectors to the FHS website editor two or three times a year so that the list of certified individuals is kept up to date on the website.
- q. Applicants desiring a review of a negative decision by the Committee may file a request with the FHS President for a formal review. The President shall review the decision of the panel and hear arguments from both applicant and the Professional Standards Committee. The decision of the President shall be final and shall be completed within three months of the formal review request.
- r. If the Chair does not have administrative support to adequately maintain records for this committee, the PSC committee may utilize an executive secretary. To do so, the PSC committee must provide the nomination of a willing member or outside entity to the FHS President immediately following the FHS elections. The FHS President will provide the nomination to EXCOM for approval. The purpose of the PSC executive secretary is to maintain records and the record keeping process. The appointment for PSC executive secretary may not exceed three years and is a non-voting position on the PSC committee. The PSC executive secretary is eligible to be re-appointed for another 3-year term using the described procedure. If duties are not being performed satisfactorily, the PSC executive secretary may be removed by a majority vote of the PSC.

D. Policy/Position Development Committee

The Policy/Position Development Committee (PPDC) committee provides a mechanism for generating official policy/position statements by the FHS. The committee is comprised of five members: the FHS President Elect, FHS Vice-President, and three elected members. The three elected members serve a 3-year term and one new member is elected to the committee each year. The committee is chaired by the FHS President Elect. Unexpected vacancies in the committee are filled by appointment of a qualified replacement by the EXCOM and the appointee will complete the term of the committee member replaced.

As the PPDC works to generate official AFS-FHS policy and position statements, it is recognized that a strong commitment to inclusivity is absolutely essential throughout the process. Indeed, any developed policies and positions should ideally represent the collective viewpoint of the entire AFS-FHS membership. Considering the diversity of the membership, there will likely be differing opinions and it may be difficult to achieve consensus in all circumstances. Therefore, the committee will strive for inclusivity to ensure all perspectives, experiences, and voices are heard and valued. Towards this end, as the PPDC evaluates proposals from any AFS-FHS member, the committee will work to capture a diversity of backgrounds and perspectives, including dissenting viewpoints, in the 4–10-person ad hoc committees that are formed to address each issue. This may include, for example, state, federal, tribal, academia, industry, and other committee members that represent a range of cultures, backgrounds, and expertise. Inclusivity is considered an essential element in making all PPDC processes legitimate, thereby leading to AFS-FHS policies and positions that are valuable and useful in representing the section.

Within one month of new members (e.g., the newly elected Vice President and newly elected PPDC member) joining the PPDC, the PPDC Chair (i.e., the President Elect) will host a remote meeting (e.g., conference call, video call, etc.) with all five PPDC members. Therein, the PPDC Chair will summarize the efforts that were undertaken during the previous PPDC term and bring the two new PPDC members up to speed on ongoing PPDC efforts.

The process for generating official policy/position statements are as follows:

- a. An individual member of the FHS submits a proposed issue, policy, or position statement to the FHS Policy/Position Development Committee (PPDC).
- b. The PPDC discusses the proposal and consults with experts from the membership who provide feedback. The PPDC also determines if this should be considered by the Parent society as an official Society Policy. The PPDC either approves/disapproves moving forward with policy/position development process.
- c. The PPDC assigns the policy/position development to a 4-10 member “project team” that represents a broad distribution of knowledge and familiarity with the issue. The project team develops a timeline for completion of the assignment and a draft policy/position statement. The project team reports back to the PPDC regarding their schedule for completion.
- d. The first draft submitted to PPDC by the project team is reviewed by the committee. The PPDC consults other reviewers as necessary. Comments are returned to the project team within four weeks.
- e. The project team incorporates/resolves comments and submits a second draft to the PPDC if necessary.
- f. The project team resolves any EXCOM concerns. The document is posted on a password secured website for four weeks to allow for comments by the membership. Current section members will be notified by Listserv email of the draft policy/position statement title and comment period. Once these comments are considered the EXCOM can approve the document by a 2/3 majority.
- g. The PPDC and project team incorporates/resolves any additional comments and produces a final draft for formatting, printing, and signature and submits the document to the EXCOM for final review.
- h. Copies are provided to appropriate targets, posted on the Website, and published in the FHS Listserv and Fisheries magazine.
- i. The Executive Committee determines if this should be passed to the Parent AFS Resource Policy Committee to be considered as an official AFS Policy.

II. Committees Appointed by the President and EXCOM

These are committees having no specific procedures stipulated for selection. Committee chairs cannot be affiliate members but must be active members of the FHS and the AFS. The senior member of a committee is defined as the person who is a current member of the FHS and the parent AFS having the longest service on the committee. The activities of these committees will not duplicate nor conflict with committee work or projects of the AFS.

A. Awards Committee

The Awards Committee consists of a Chair and two members selected by the President and EXCOM for the three-year staggered terms. The senior member is usually the Chair, but the committee can decide to have a non-senior member be the Chair. The committee is responsible for nominating candidates for: (1) the S.F. Snieszko Distinguished Service Award (SDSA), the highest award of the FHS, presented for the purpose of honoring individuals for outstanding accomplishment in the field of fish health. The award need not be presented every year and more than one presentation can be made in a single year when appropriate; (2) the Special Achievement Award for timely recognition for one-time accomplishments that have a significant impact on the management or control of fish health problems; (3) the Snieszko Student Travel Award to defray student travel to an FHS affiliated meeting to present a paper in the fish health field; and (4) judging and selecting the best Summer Seminar Series presentations. Winners are awarded money to be used for in-person attendance at an FHS affiliated meeting of their choice. The most recent recipient of the S.F. Snieszko Distinguished Service Award may be appointed to a 3-year term in the Awards Committee if they are an active member of the FHS and the AFS. This appointment would provide continuity in the annual solicitation and selection for this award.

Additional awards, procedures and criteria for selection of award candidates are listed in Chapter 5, Miscellaneous Criteria, under section V. "Awards".

The procedure for presentation of awards should include:

- a. At the meeting banquet or other suitable time, the President calls on the Awards Committee Chair to name the award recipients and read pertinent biographical information.
- b. The outgoing President presents the award certificates.
- c. The local arrangements committee for the meeting has photographs taken to record the presentation, which are posted on the FHS website in a timely manner.

Note: Selection of the best student paper award may require judging to continue until the very last of the technical presentations of the meeting. Therefore, the award can be posted on the FHS website and included in the next issue of the Listserv.

B. Archives Committee

The Archives Committee consists of a Chair and two members appointed by the President and FHS EXCOM. Appointments can be up to two 3-year terms.

- a. The committee maintains permanent records of all activities and actions of the FHS, including the constitution and by-laws, elections, rosters of officers, membership, meeting sites, committee reports, awards, publications, photographs, affiliations and such other business that has historical significance subject to the approval of the EXCOM.
- b. This committee establishes a permanent site for the repository of materials and makes the arrangements for housing the archives.
- c. An up-to-date record of current materials in the archives is maintained and available on request by the EXCOM and the membership.

C. Continuing Education Committee

The FHS Continuing Education Committee (CEC) consists of a chair and four members appointed by the President and the EXCOM for up to two 2-year terms. Membership terms should be staggered to ensure overlap of current and new members. CEC members should represent different meetings and professions (e.g. Western, Eastern, Veterinarian, and Veterinary Technicians). This committee has a line-item budget in the FHS finances that is generated from registration fees from each presented workshop. These fees are to be used to help provide assistance for future workshops as it relates to the following: Registry of Approved Continuing Education (RACE) Provider Renewal fees (required every 2 years currently), RACE CE application and submission fee per credit hour for each workshop, funding to assist reduction or coverage of workshop speakers travel expenses, etc.

The re-certification procedure for FHS Fish Pathologists and Aquatic Animal Health Inspectors requires accumulation of a minimum number of Continuing Education (CE) credits every 5 years (100 credits and 60 credits, respectively). The purpose of the CEC is to ensure that 4-8 hour continuing education training courses are available for fish health professionals at each of the following annual meetings:

- FHS Annual Meeting*
- Western Fish Disease Workshop
- Eastern Fish Health Workshop

*The FHS Annual Meeting convenes concurrently with the Western Fish Disease Workshop every other year. During these years, CE courses will be offered at each of the following meetings:

- Combined FHS Annual Meeting and Western Fish Disease Workshop
- Eastern Fish Health Workshop

To this end, the CEC is responsible for ensuring that appropriate CE sessions are provided at each of the aforementioned meetings. Typically, this is accomplished by working with the local meeting organizers to ensure that a local CE proxy committee has been established for each meeting/workshop. If a local CE proxy committee cannot be established, then the CEC will find alternative means to organize the CE topic, speakers, and program. A list of CE topics from recent meetings will be maintained by the CEC and displayed on the FHS web page.

Additionally, the CEC will provide customized course documents required for RACE accreditation and will facilitate submission of these completed documents to the CEC chair 60 days prior to each course. Some of these are available on the AAVSB website that sponsors RACE - <https://www.aavsb.org/>. The CEC maintains a permanent record of training achievement for future recertification requirements.

Chapter 4: Ad Hoc or Special Committees

Standing Committees are established through amendment of the by-laws and are usually created by converting a Special Committee that has been deemed worthy of permanent status. Special Committees address topics not covered by the by-laws where formalized actions or opinions are needed on some issues and are created by the President of the FHS with the support of the EXCOM. Special Committees

exist for only one year but may be re-appointed for subsequent years on a year-to-year basis by succeeding Presidents of the FHS.

I. Current Ad Hoc Committees

A. Fish Health Laboratory QA/QC Committee

The Fish Health Laboratory QA/QC Committee consists of up to 10 members made up of qualified individuals who have expressed an interest in advancing a quality assurance recognition program for fish health laboratories. The committee also represents a balance between USFWS and State interests, with additional non-voting input from USDA/APHIS. Vacancies for this committee are filled by nominations and approval by committee members, with subsequent notification of the FHS President. There are no term limits for committee members.

- a. The main roles and duties of this committee are to formulate and implement the standards for Tier 1 (pre-qualification) and Tier 2 (recognition) programs.
- b. The committee reviews the applications of laboratories applying for Tier 1.
- c. The committee will participate in coaching internal audits for Tier 2 applicants, as well as reviewing their applications.
- d. The committee will formulate and implement the future requirements for Tier 3.

B. Section Communications Committee

The Section Communications Committee consists of at least two members in which one member serves as writer/editor of the FHS newsletter (listserv) and another member serves as Webmaster of the website. The committee can be chaired by any member. The committee is responsible for: (1) maintaining the email Listserv via emaildodo.com, (2) writing and distributing the monthly newsletter to the section, (3) maintaining the FHS website and associated information and (4) maintaining the FHS Twitter and Facebook accounts.

- a. Procedures for writing/editing the newsletter are:
 1. In advance of each newsletter, solicit section officers and committee heads for updates. Members will also regularly reach out to the chair with FHS news items, meeting announcements, job announcements, etc.
 2. The newsletter should be distributed on approximately a monthly basis. However, twice monthly may be needed if many new updates occur within a month. Less frequent updates may also occur during slow times of the year such as summer. The Listserv editor has some discretion on frequency; however, information needs to be distributed in a timely manner.
 3. An unofficial format has been developed over the years that has been kept to maintain consistency. The Listserv editor updates the sections with new updates first. They also delete any updates that have expired (i.e., past meeting date(s) or application deadline). Updates from past newsletters are kept if still relevant; however, updates are typically removed after 2-3 months.

4. Each newsletter is sent as an attachment to email with a short summary of new content to the FHS listserv. All associated flyers, etc. are also attached to the email. The Webmaster should be copied to ensure they get any updates that should be added to the website.
 5. The Listserv editor also separately emails the section as needed if time sensitive information needs to be distributed between newsletters and for any other announcements not covered by the newsletter (i.e., announcements by AFS or FHS president, etc.). Therefore, the Listserv editor must regularly keep aware of emails regarding the Section.
 6. The Listserv editor maintains the listserv roster via emaildodo.com.
- b. The FHS website webmaster is responsible for uploading and maintaining information on the FHS website (<https://units.fisheries.org/fhs/>). Regular website changes include:
1. Designing and publishing information about upcoming meetings. Meeting host(s) should produce script and pictures that can be uploaded and saved on the Meeting page (<https://units.fisheries.org/fhs/meetings/>). If available, include links to external websites that are associated with meeting. Customized meeting web pages can be created on FHS website for a meeting if wanted.
 2. Update committee member list. Once a new FHS president has taken office, they should have an updated list of committee members. If possible, include contact information for each new person.
 3. FHS Blue Book updates. When updates to the Blue Book have been approved by the appropriate committees, they can be stored on the FHS website media manager. Links within the Blue Book section (<https://units.fisheries.org/fhs/fish-health-section-blue-book-2016/>) of the FHS website should be updated to connect with revised content.
 4. Upload current Listserv newsletter. Each month the Section Communications Committee sends out a newsletter thru the FHS Listserv. That newsletter is uploaded to the websites media manager and available to view under the Newsletter menu (<https://units.fisheries.org/fhs/about/homepage-new/>).

C. International Meeting Oversight Committee

This committee consists of the primary organizers of previous international meetings, who provide material and advice to the local organizing chair for the International Symposium on Aquatic Animal Health (ISAHA). This will include being available for discussions on meeting planning, venue contracts and budgeting.

D. Recruitment and Student Involvement Committee

The Recruitment and Student Involvement Committee consists of at least three members including current students and/or early career professionals. The purpose of the committee is to improve the recruitment and retention of aquatic animal health and related professionals, at all career stages, and to maintain an engaged and active membership.

II. Examples of Previous Ad Hoc Committees

The following partial list contains examples of previous Ad Hoc committees of the FHS that have value for future re-appointment if the same needs arise.

A. By-laws Review Committee

The By-laws Review Committee was created to review and suggest potential amendments to the FHS by-laws to make them more current. The committee consisted of two co-Chairs and six other members.

B. International Standards Committee

The International Standards Committee was responsible for establishing the criteria, qualifications and procedures for certification of fish health practitioners that would be standardized and accepted by all participating countries and nations worldwide. The committee was composed of two co-Chairs and five other members.

C. Long-Range Planning Committee

The Long-Range Planning Committee had the purpose of long-term strategic planning for the FHS. This committee consisted of one Chair and the Chairs of all standing committees as the other members.

D. Committee for Fish Health Professional-Veterinary Interactions

In recent years, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration initiated an increased awareness of the veterinary profession for regulating aquatic animal health issues as in other fields of animal health.

This committee, composed of two co-chairs and three other members, had a complement of veterinary and non-veterinary fish health professionals. The charge for this committee was the integration of both fish health professional and veterinary medical philosophies during the merging of these two factions.

E. Fish Health Section Promotion Committee

This committee is composed of one member appointed to promote new membership in the FHS by developing visual aids including a brochure and poster for mailing and dissemination at meetings.

Chapter 5: Miscellaneous Criteria

I. Meetings

- The FHS will convene one or more fish health workshops annually and an annual FHS and business meeting. Business meetings can be held if a quorum is present consisting of the President or President Elect or both and 15 Section members.
- Business meetings of the FHS can be called by the EXCOM provided the membership is given written notice at least 30 days in advance and a quorum is convened as defined above.

- All proceeds in excess of meeting expenses are to be submitted by the meeting organizer to the Secretary-Treasurer for deposit into the FHS General Funds account.

II. Special Projects

Funding for special projects including symposia or international meetings, non-budgeted publications and continuing education is approved by the EXCOM and each is a line item in the FHS budget under “Special Projects” (if needed). Money is disbursed by the Secretary-Treasurer to the appropriate standing committee for expenses as needed. The EXCOM can approve the expenditure of FHS funds derived from special projects outside the annual budget.

Special project receipts are kept separate from membership fees by the Secretary-Treasurer.

III. Fees

Any change of fee structure must be approved by majority vote of the FHS EXCOM.

IV. Amendments to the By-laws

- Amendments to the FHS by-laws are brought to a vote of the membership by a petition signed by not less than ten percent of the members in good standing or after majority vote approval by the EXCOM.
- The EXCOM prepares and processes a mail or electronic ballot regarding the proposed by-law changes. The membership-at-large is given thirty days in which to return ballot votes on by-law amendments.
- The amendments are adopted when a two-thirds (2/3) majority of received ballots vote favorably on a proposal.
- Amendments are not effective until approved by the AFS Governing Board in accordance with the by-laws of the parent Society.

V. Awards

The FHS standing Awards Committee solicits nominations for the S.F. Snieszko Distinguished Service Award (SDSA), the Special Achievement Award and the Snieszko Student Travel Awards.

A. S.F. Snieszko Distinguished Service Award

The highest award in the FHS presented for the purpose of honoring individuals for outstanding accomplishments in the field of aquatic animal health. This is a career award and may be given to more than one person in a year but is not necessarily awarded every year.

- a. The Chair of the Awards Committee solicits nominations for the SDSA from the Section membership by providing the Listserv Editor an announcement no later than December 1st, describing the purpose of the award and where nominations should be sent. Receipt of nominations from the Section will close on February 1.

- b. The committee screens nominations from the membership and selects candidates for the SDSA based on merit and specific criteria as listed below.
 1. Individuals to be considered for this award must be nominated by a current member of the FHS.
 2. Persons making nominations must obtain six letters of recommendation from fish health professionals that support the nominee's dedication to research, teaching and/or service to the field of aquatic animal health. The six letters along with the curriculum vitae for the nominee should be sent to the Awards Committee with a letter of nomination prior to February 1 of any given year.
 3. Because this is a career award, candidates should have a significant number of active years in service within the fish or shellfish health field as well as significant accomplishments, which are not limited to but can include the following examples:
 - i. Candidates should have a significant number of research publications in recognized peer reviewed journals and/or book chapters and books within the subject of fish or shellfish health.
 - ii. A candidate must have been active in finfish and shellfish health research or diagnostics as indicated by significant publications and/or secured grants for graduate student thesis projects, and/or administration of a successful finfish or shellfish health program or laboratory.
 - iii. Accomplishment by a candidate of a major discovery regarding a new finfish or shellfish disease or diseases and/or continued significant contributions to the understanding of a previously discovered disease or diseases.
 - iv. Previous recognition by peers through other society, committee or distinguished service awards and/or by elected or appointed chair/presidential positions.
 4. The Awards Committee will send a ballot package of supporting documents for each nominee to members of the Section EXCOM and to each surviving previous recipient of the SDSA that can be contacted through a valid forwarding address for a confidential vote on the candidate(s) no later than two months before the meeting at which awards are to be presented. A majority vote of 80% of the votes cast within the deadline set by the committee in favor of one or more candidates will determine the award recipient(s) for a given year. The Awards Committee will notify the FHS President of the ballot results and will notify any successful new recipient of the award.
 5. The SDSA for each recipient will include \$1000 to be used to help defray travel and per diem expenses to attend the award presentation at the annual FHS or joint AFS meeting.
 6. Recipients of the SDSA are automatically nominated by the Awards Committee for the AFS Award of Excellence.
 7. Recipients of the SDSA may be awarded an honorary life membership in the AFS if such a petition is signed by 100 current members of the AFS and submitted by the Awards Committee along with a preamble from the membership to the parent Society before the annual AFS meeting is held.

B. Special Achievement Award

Presented to a FHS member or group that has made a significant accomplishment in the fish health field regarding a new discovery, diagnostic method, publication, etc. This award is for a one-time

accomplishment and may or may not be given out every year. This award may be given for a unique contribution to the fish health field (i.e., a new diagnostic tool or technique to control disease), must meet high standards of science and survive peer review.

Individuals to be considered for this award must be nominated by a current member of the FHS. The letter of nomination should clearly state: (1) the accomplishment, (2) the significance of the accomplishment to the field and (3) the implication of the accomplishment to aquaculture (local, regional, national, or worldwide). Copies of any articles or other documents relating to the work should be included. Nominations for the Special Achievement Award should be made within one year of the accomplishment and may be submitted to the Chair of the Awards Committee at any time. Names of qualifying candidates and supporting documents will be submitted to the EXCOM members for a majority vote on whether the award will be presented.

C. Snieszko Student Travel Awards

A sum of up to \$2000 awarded to one or more students yearly to defray travel to a professional meeting to present a talk in the aquatic animal health field. The requirements and procedures for selection of student awards are as follows:

- a. Basic Requirements from Student Applicants
 1. Letter of application and statement of any special financial circumstances (i.e., not supported by a stipend, etc.)
 2. Curriculum vitae must be submitted along with three letters of recommendation.
 3. Itemized budget on how money is to be spent (i.e., air and ground transportation, meals, lodging and registration).
 4. Copy of abstract of paper to be presented.
 5. The student must be a member of the FHS. As long as they have an active AFS-FHS student membership for the year, they are eligible for student awards through the end of the year, even if the conference is happening after graduation.
- b. Judgment Criteria
 1. Quality of abstract
 2. Significance of/interest in the research
 3. Academic achievement
 4. Professional achievement
 5. Financial need
- c. Procedure for Selection
 1. Call for applications should be submitted to the Listserv editor by the Awards Committee at the same time the meeting announcement is submitted. The Awards Committee needs to be in contact with the Program Committee to ensure this happens.
 2. Chair of the Awards Committee receives the application packets and sends an email of receipt to each applicant.
 3. Applicants are ranked according to the Judgment Criteria.
 4. The number of applicants awarded travel funds will depend upon the amount of funds available and the ranking and number of applicants. The intent is to fund as many students as possible, beginning with the highest ranked. Typically, one to five travel

awards are awarded. The Awards Committee must send a request for the number and value of travel awards to the EXCOM for approval prior to determining how many awards are to be awarded.

5. Committee decisions for awarding the travel funds are relayed to each applicant by email. The FHS Secretary-Treasurer is notified to send checks to the successful candidates once the candidates have provided proof of registration for a conference. The meeting program chair is also notified of the successful applicants such that footnotes on their printed abstracts may identify them as student travel award winners.
6. Awardees should be added to the list of award winners maintained on the FHS website.

D. Best Student Presentation and/or Poster Award

Awarded for the best paper presented by a student at the FHS annual meeting.

- a. Basic Requirements from Student Applicants
 1. Stated interest in competing for the award to accompany the submitted abstract.
 2. The student must be a member of the FHS.
- b. Judgment Criteria
 1. Best Student Paper
 - i. Presentation Content
 1. Introduction: Provides broad conceptual framework and overview of previous work, and the hypothesis and/or objectives are clearly stated
 2. Methods: Originality, appropriate use of methods/statistics, and effort required (short vs. long study)
 3. Results and Discussion: Significance of contribution, conclusions well supported, relevance of findings to the field, placed in border context, and originality of the work
 - ii. Presentation Style and Delivery
 1. Ability to speak clearly
 2. Organization of presentation
 3. Quality of presentation graphics/images (meaningful, clearly labeled, etc.)
 4. Quality of delivery: Minimal use of jargon, not reading slides, maintain eye contact with audience
 5. Time management: met time limits
 6. Effect on audience: generated lots of questions, excitement vs. silence
 2. Best Student Poster
 - i. Poster Content
 1. Abstract: Quality of the summary and quality of the writing
 2. Introduction: Provides broad conceptual framework and overview of previous work, and the hypothesis and/or objectives are clearly stated
 3. Methods: Originality, appropriate use of methods/statistics, and effort required (short vs. long study)
 4. Results and Discussion: Significance of contribution, conclusions well supported, relevance of findings to the field, placed in border context, and originality of the work

- ii Poster Style and Presentation
 - 1. Adhered to poster layout criteria
 - 2. Emphasis on images/graphic elements over text
 - 3. Visual appearance
 - 4. Organization of poster
 - 5. Quality of presentation graphics/images (meaningful, clearly labeled, etc.)
 - 6. Effect on audience: Generated much attention
- c. Procedure for Selection
 - 1. Announcement of student paper competition and requirements accompany the annual meeting announcement in the Listserv. These materials should be submitted to the Listserv editor by the Awards Committee at the same time the meeting announcement is submitted.
 - 2. Receipt of abstracts by the Program Committee from qualified students with statements of intent to compete for the award.
 - 3. The member of the Program Committee responsible for the host location arrangements for the meeting will solicit three or more people attending the technical sessions to act as judges. The judges should be FHS members and should have no conflict of interest (relatives, student faculty or advisors, employers, etc.) with any of the candidate students presenting papers.
 - 4. Scheduling of student papers competing for the award on the meeting agenda should be arranged by the Program Committee so that any two such papers are not in concurrent sessions. This will allow all judges to observe each paper presentation. In larger meetings or in meetings where concurrent presentations by two or more students cannot be avoided, additional judges should be recruited, and the papers divided among the judges such that each paper is critiqued by the same number of judges.
 - 5. Candidates will be ranked, and a winner chosen by highest score.
- d. Recognition of Best Student Paper Award Winner
 - 1. The Program Committee will provide the name of the winner to the Listserv editor for announcement in the next issue of the Listserv.
 - 2. The recipient of this award will receive up to \$400.

E. Annual Award for Most Significant Paper published in the Section's Journal of Aquatic Animal Health

This award is given annually by the parent AFS based on procedures and criteria below.

- a. Procedure
 - 1. The president of AFS appoints willing members of the FHS to a subcommittee of the Publications Award Committee of the AFS. The AFS president selects a chair and 4-5 other members to review the past year publications in the JAAH. The appointed Chair may also enlist the other committee members at the discretion of the AFS president.
 - 2. In general, paper evaluation will consist of a two or three stage process of review and ranking, with each subcommittee member evaluating all papers published in the previous year volume. The first round of evaluation and subsequent voting by email is designed to select a subset of six finalist papers to be reconsidered as the best paper.

These are ranked by points from highest to lowest score. The second round of voting will select the best paper from that subset determined in the first round.

3. The deadline for paper selection is a predetermined date in advance of the AFS annual meeting, generally occurring no earlier than June.
- b. Judging Criteria – Since all papers selected for publication are reviewed by the same journal standards, additional criteria are necessary to identify those papers that are exceptional candidates for consideration of best paper.
 1. Experimental Design – is the experimental design adequate (3 pts) or exceptional (5 pts)?
 2. Is the paper innovative or not in the approach to achieve the overall objective(s)? Not (0 pts); innovative such that more efficient methods are used to provide equal data or there are new and different methods producing significantly more or exceptional data (3 pts); perhaps the data generated provides a new perspective of knowledge in evaluating a subject area (5 pts)?
 3. Importance of conclusions and findings. Supports previous knowledge (1 pt); provides new knowledge (3 pts); knowledge could change the direction of future studies in that subject area (5 pts).
 4. Review papers are judged separately by the following criteria:
 - i. Adequate reviews exist elsewhere on the subject (1 pt); existing reviews are outdated therefore this review is important in updating the subject area (3 pts); there are no previous reviews on this subject and this review would be an important contribution that has been lacking in the literature (5 pts).
 - ii. Adequate (3 pts) or exhaustive (5 pts) inclusion of all significant literature on the subject,
 - iii. Based on subject synthesis, the review is critical to pointing the direction of future research. No (0 pts); Yes (5 pts).

VI. Procedures for Revocation and Censure of Aquatic Animal Health Inspector/Fish Pathologist Certifications

An Aquatic Animal Health Inspector or Fish Pathologist may be censured or have their certification revoked for reasons such as gross negligence, incompetence, falsification of data or reports, misrepresentation, acceptance of a bribe, or any other action determined by the Professional Standards Committee to be unethical.

A. Procedure

- a. Within one week following receipt of written documentation of alleged unethical conduct by a certified Aquatic Animal Health Inspector or Fish Pathologist, the Chair of the PSC shall mail copies of all documents to all members of the PSC (see B.b., B.c.). The PSC shall consider the evidence presented and within one week of receiving the documentation decide, by majority vote, if it is sufficient to warrant further action.
- b. If the PSC finds that evidence provided warrants no further action, the Chair shall so notify, in writing, the person or persons filing the original complaint.

- c. If the PSC determines that the evidence warrants further action, the Chair shall notify the accused, in writing, of the charges. The accused has 30 days in which to provide the PSC with a written response to the charges.
- d. The Chair of the PSC shall coordinate the gathering of written information concerning the alleged unethical conduct from all parties who have firsthand knowledge of the event in question. All such information should be gathered within 30 days after the PSC has determined further action is warranted.
- e. When all pertinent information (for and against the accused) has been obtained by Chair of the PSC, the Chair shall forward said information to all PSC members and the President Elect of the FHS. The President Elect will be responsible for making sure that the ethics complaint is handled according to the By-Laws and Procedures of the FHS and will vote on revocation along with the PSC. Each PSC member and the President Elect will mail their vote, for or against revocation, to the Chair of the PSC within two weeks of receiving all written documentation involved in the case. If deemed necessary, the Chair may convene a conference telephone call among PSC members (at FHS expense) to discuss the case during the two-week period.
 - 1. Revocation of certification requires a minimum of three votes. If the Committee votes for revocation, the Chair will notify the FHS President. The President will notify the accused of the result from the PSC and advise them that they may either appeal the decision to the FHS EXCOM or surrender their certification within 30 days. Copies of this notification will be sent to all witnesses and the complainant in the case and will become part of the permanent PSC file. If the decision is not appealed and the certificate is not surrendered within 30 days, notice of the revocation will be published in the next two issues of the FHS newsletter.
 - 2. If two or fewer PSC members (including the President Elect) vote for revocation, a second vote shall be taken to determine if the accused shall undergo censure. Censure requires a minimum of three votes and shall consist of a written reprimand from the Chair of the PSC to the accused with copies to all witnesses, the complainant, and to the permanent PSC file.
 - 3. If two or fewer PSC members vote for censure, the accused is acquitted and shall be notified in writing by the Chair with copies to all witnesses, the complainant, and to the permanent PSC file. This decision is final with no option for appeal by the accusers or other parties.

B. Other Considerations

- a. Certification may be surrendered by the accused at any time and the revocation process shall then be discontinued. The accused may reapply for certification five years from the surrender date. The certificate and the original written complaint shall become part of the permanent PSC file.
- b. PSC members and the President Elect may disqualify themselves from participating in the revocation/censure process if they feel that they cannot consider the case objectively. In such cases the Chair of the PSC will appoint a member of that committee to fulfill the disqualified PSC person's responsibilities pertaining to the specific case in question. If the President Elect is unable to serve, the FHS Vice President will serve instead.

- c. A PSC member or President Elect, or any person appointed to act in place of a PSC member or President Elect, is automatically disqualified from participating in the revocation/censure process if the person is the accused or is involved in the case as a witness for or against the accused. The Chair of the PSC shall appoint a member of that committee to fulfill the responsibilities of any person so disqualified. If the President Elect is unable to serve, the Section Vice President will serve instead.
- d. Any person who has their certification revoked may not reapply for certification for a period of five years from the revocation date.
- e. Time frames stated in procedures for revocation/censure are guidelines only. Exceeding any one of these does not invalidate any portion of the proceedings.

C. Appeal

- a. Any person who has undergone censure or who has had their certification revoked may file a written appeal with the FHS President within 30 days of the revocation/censure date. This is the date which appears on the official notification of revocation/censure.
- b. Upon receipt of the appeal, the FHS President will request copies of all documents pertaining to the case from the Chair of the PSC. The PSC Chair and President will consult and determine if the appeal requires the acquisition and/or acceptance of any new information. Copies of all original and new information will be sent to all elected EXCOM members (including any who acted as a PSC member during initial consideration of the case).
- c. Within two weeks, the President will conduct a vote of the EXCOM to reverse the revocation or censure. If a revocation is overturned, the EXCOM will conduct a second vote to determine if the revocation should be replaced by censure. Action on any of these votes will be taken only if five of seven EXCOM members vote in favor.
- d. All records of PSC actions will be retained in PSC permanent files. If action by the FHS results in revocation or censure, the case will be referred to the AFS Ethics and Professional Conduct Committee so that the AFS can determine if the ethics policy of the AFS has also been violated.

D. Instructions to Professional Standards Committee

It is the philosophy of the FHS that revocation of certification should be the consequence of immoral, illegal and/or dishonest actions or gross incompetence.

Censure would ordinarily be the appropriate course of action in cases of negligence. In malpractice cases courts generally do not consider incorrect decisions or diagnoses to be negligent unless they resulted from failure to obtain necessary information or to follow acceptable procedures. This seems to be appropriate as a general guideline for the PSC in determining negligence for the purpose of censure. Other possible reasons for censure include, but are not limited to, unethical actions of a more minor nature that would be considered grounds for revocation.